

ACCESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

LD 2550, An Act to Ensure Cost Effective & Safe Highways (119th Maine Legislature

Purpose:

- assure the safety of the traveling public
- manage highway capacity
- conserve state highway investment
- enhance economic productivity related to transportation,
- and conserve air, water and land resources.
- protect highways against negative impacts of unmanaged drainage.

The **Access Management Program** for Maine includes

- access management rules
- corridor planning and preservation
 - o access acquisition/control
 - o access development and
 - o land use management along the corridor

The Rules:

The Act specifically directed the MDOT and authorized municipalities to promulgate rules to assure safety and proper drainage on all state and state aid highways with a focus on maintaining posted speeds on arterial highways outside urban compact areas. The law also requires that the rules include standards for avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of safety hazards along the portions of rural arterials where the 1999 statewide average for driveway related crash rates is exceeded. Those rural arterials are referred to in rule as "Retrograde Arterials".

Minor Technical changes to Maine's current highway access permitting rules went into affect on March 1, 2002. Additional rules (**Major Substantive**) that employ more substantial safety measures on the Mobility and Retrograde Arterials became effective on May 25th, 2002.

Several Minor Technical rule amendments are being developed. They are expected to become effective in the winter of 2003. (Change of use provisions, waivers for double frontage lots, definition of alteration, associated minor housekeeping changes.) (See highlights attached.)

Corridor Planning and Preservation:

Access management rules are viewed as only one part of the statewide access management program. The program envisions prioritized planning and preservation of

Mobility Arterial corridors most at risk of losing capacity, safety, and of diminishing posted speeds, due to increasing development and commuter and visitor pressures. Mobility arterial corridors most at risk are those designated as NHS highways and where:

- congestion is already being experienced,
- driveway related crash rates exceed the 1999 average,
- municipalities have designated growth areas, or
- water and sewer infrastructure exists,
- natural resources are threatened (e.g. water supply or salmon watersheds, farmland, views etc.).

The identification of these "most-at-risk" Mobility Arterial corridors is currently under way. The Corridor Planning and Preservation Program includes corridor planning where MDOT, in partnership with adjoining municipalities, property owners, standing corridor committees and Scenic Byway corridor committees and other stakeholders along a mobility arterial corridor join forces to develop strategies that assures the stated purposes of the law are met and maintained. Such efforts would outline appropriate locations for such access management techniques as

- access rights acquisition,
- development of frontage roads and shared driveways,
- intersections improvements,
- development of turn lanes and
- installation of signals
- along with appropriate local land use regulations that enhance the objectives of the access management law and the Sensible Transportation Policy Act.

Plans will be required to outline corridor protection measures that assure maintenance of safety and speed, and management of drainage, as well as the development, protection or enhancement of important natural and/ or man-made environmental features along the highway corridor.

Partnerships:

Potential partnerships for preserving corridors are being explored with Lands for Maine's Future, Conservation Associations, Land Trusts, and the like.

For more information contact Kathy Fuller at 624-3281 or Kathy.Fuller@state.me.us

*Visit the MDOT Access Management website at
www.state.me.us/mdot/planning/bureauweb/accesslinks.htm*